

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3358

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL BELIZE

USUN NEW YORK 590

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE GUATEMALA 6874

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR GT BH

SUBJECT: GUATEMALA'S BELIZE POLICY

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT LAUGERUD PUBLICLY REPEATED THAT GUATEMALA'S POLICY ON BELIZE IS TO TRY TO RECOVER ITS TERRITORY GHROUGH NEGOTIATIONS, BUT IF THEY FAIL GUATEMALA IS PREPARED TO USE FORCE. END SUMMARY

2. PRESIDENT LAUGERUD TRAVELLED TO MELCHOR DE MENCOS, BELIZE BORDER TOWN IN PETEN, ON SEPTEMBER 30 TO INAUGURATE WHAT WAS DESCRIBED AS FIRST PHASE OF CONSTRUCTION WORK TO MODERNIZE TOWN. AMONG WORKS INAUGERUATED WAS NEW RADIO STATION, RADIO MOPAN, WHICH "INITIATED ITS TRANSMISSIONS IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH COVERING THE BELIZEAN TERRITORY, THE PETEN AND PART OF MEXICO."

3. ACCORDING PRESS REPORTS, LAUGERUD TOLD CROWD, IN SPEECH CARRIED ON NATIONAL TV, THAT "WE DONNOT DENY THAT OUR CONTRY STILL FIGHTS AGAINST UNDERDEVELOPMENT, ESPECIALLY NOW THAT IT HAS BEEN STRUCK BY MISFORTUNES OF NATURE, BUT THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT WE CANNOT TAK LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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UP BAYONET AND MACHETE TO RECOVER OUR BELIZEAN

TERRITORY CURRENTLY UNDER ENGLISH CONTROL.

4. "WE ARE EXHAUSTING ALL PEACEFUL MEANS TO RECOVER OUR BELIZEAN TERRITORY. WE HAVE TURNED TO NEGOTIATIONS TO SEE IF IN THIS WAY WE CAN OBTAIN A SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENT, BUT IF ENGLAND STILL REFUSES TO GIVE US BELIZE, WE ARE NOT EUNUCHS AND DESPITE OUR WEAKENED CONDITION, WE WILL RECOVER IT (BELIZE) AT THE COST OF OUR LIVES IF NECESSARY.

5. "AFTER SUCKING THE LAST DROP OF BLOOD THE ENGLISH ARE PREPARED TO GIVE A FALSE INDEPENDENCE TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE TERRITORIES THEY DETAIN IN AN ACT THAT STEMS FROM VENGEANCE... THE ENGLISH SHOULD NOT BELIEVE THAT WE WILL RENOUNCE OUR RIGHTS, BECAUSE THE FACT THAT WE ARE EXHAUSTING ALL PACIFIC MEANS TO RECOVER GUATEMALA'S DETAINED TERRITORY DOES NOT MEAN THAT WE CANNOT SEIZE THE PISTOL AND THE MACHETE.

6. "IF TODAY WE ARE INAUGURATING VARIOUS PROJECTS IN MELCHOR DE MENCOS, WITHIN A SHORT TIME WE WILL BE DOING IT ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BORDER BECAUSE BELIZE IS ONE OF THE 23 DEPARTMENTS OF THE REPUBLIC.

7. "THE PROBLEM OF GUATEMALA AND OF ALL GUATEMALANS IS NOT AND NEVER WILL BE WITH THE BELIZEANS. OUR PROBLEM IS WITH THE ENGLISH USURPERS THAT DESPOIL A PART OF OUR TERRITORY."

8. LAUGERUD THEN ASKED HIS COUNTRYMEN "TO RECEIVE AS BROTHERS AND WITH OPEN ARMS AND HEART INHABITANTS OF GUATEMALA'S 23RD PROVINCE."

9. COMMENT: EMOTIONAL TONE OF LAUGERUD'S REMARKS IS SOMEWHAT UNUSUAL FOR HIM, BUT THIS IS PROBABLY BECAUSE HE WAS MAKING HIS SPEECH RIGHT ON THE BELIZE BORDER. THE SUBSTANCE OF HIS REMARKS, HOWEVER, IS SIMPLY A RESTATEMENT OF GUATEMALA'S OFTEN-REPEATED PUBLIC POLICY OF TRYING TO RECOVER BELIZE THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS FIRST WHILE KEEPING THE MILITARY OPTION AVAILABLE SHOULD THE NEGOTIATIONS FAIL.
ANDREWS

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